

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ADDIS 00288 181541Z
ACTION SS-25

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O 181502Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
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S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 0288

EXDIS

LONDON FOR MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PEPR, ET, US, KE
SUBJ: KENYAN DEMARCHE TO OAU SEC GEN AND ETHIOPIAN FONMIN

REF: STATE 013437 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: KENYAN AMB, CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY ETHIOPIA
MIGHT BREAK RELATIONS WITH US, IS URGING OAU SEC GEN
TO ISSUE STATEMENT REASSERTING OAU PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY WHICH HE HOPES VERY HIGH LEVEL USG OFFICIAL(S)
COULD SUPPORT. HE ALSO WILLING TO MAKE DEMARCHE
TO EPMG FONMIN EXPLAINING PRES CARTER'S JAN 12 COMMENT COULD
BE INTERPRETED AS TILT TOWARD ETHIOPIA AND IMPLIED CRITICISM
OF SOMALIA FOR CROSSING INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED
BOUNDARY IN FIRST PLACE. END SUMMARY

1. HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM SEEING KENYAN AMB F. K. NGANATHA,
WHO SQUEEZED ME IN PRIOR TO LEAVING TO SEE OAU SEC GEN ETEKI.
NGANATHA AGREED THAT MOFA STATEMENT OF JAN 14, COUPLED WITH TODAY'S
"LETTER TO THE EDITOR" (ADDIS ABABA 0279), CLEARLY INDICATE EPMG

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IS AT LEAST CONSIDERING BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH US.
THIS, HE FEELS, IS CLEARLY THE WORK OF SOVIETS AND WOULD
BE AGAINST INTERESTS OF KENYA.

2. FIRST HE ASKED ME IF IT
WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR USG TO LABEL SIAD BARRE
AS AGGRESSOR AND DISAVOW SHAH'S AND SAUDI ARABIAN FONMIN'S

LATEST DECLARATIONS CONCERNING AID TO SOMALIA IF ETHIOPIA CROSSES BORDER AS PART OF ITS DEFENSE EFFORT. HE ADMITTED, IN RESPONSE TO MY GOING OVER PRES CARTER'S JAN 12 STATEMENT, THAT THE POSSIBILITY HAD NOT OCCURRED TO HIM THAT PRESIDENT MIGHT BE TILTING AGAINST SOMALIA, AND HE WAS POSITIVE IT HAD NOT OCCURRED TO THE ETHIOPIANS THAT WAY EITHER. HE WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT THE ETHIOPIANS COULD BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND USG POINT AND THEREFORE WAS DEEPLY DISTURBED TO HEAR THAT FONMIN HAD NOT AGREED TO SEE ME, DESPITE REPEATED REQUESTS SINCE MONDAY MORNING.

3. I EXPLAINED TO NGANATHA THAT GIVEN THE REALITIES OF AMERICA, I THOUGHT PRESIDENT HAD GONE ABOUT AS FAR AS HE COULD GO. MANY ELEMENTS IN THE PUBLIC AND IN CONGRESS ARE AGAINST EVERYTHING THE SOVIETS DO AND, FURTHERMORE, ARE EXTREMELY CRITICAL OF ADMINISTRATION'S INITIATIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. FOR THAT REASON, AND SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I DID NOT SEE HOW PRESIDENT COULD COME OUT UNEQUIVOCALLY IN SUPPORT OF MARXIST ETHIOPIA PER SEALTHOUGH WE HAVE TOLD EPMG THAT WE HAVE URGED SIAD BARRE TO WITHDRAW AND ARE CONTINUING TO DENY HIM ARMS DESIPITE HIS LATEST APPEAL.

4. AT THIS POINT, NGANATHA THREW OUT THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL: DURING HIS MEETING THIS AFTERNOON WITH OAU SECGEN ETEKI, HE WOULD URGE HIM TO MAKE A STATEMENT
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REAFFIRMING OAU PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED BOUNDARIES. IF THE USG, PARTICULARLY SOMEONE AT A VERY HIGH LEVEL, COULD THEN SUPPORT THE OAU SECGEN'S STATEMENT, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD COOLING PRESENTLY HEATED ETHIOPIAN TEMPER. I REPLIED THAT SINCE USG HAD CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED OAU AND THIS PRINCIPLE IN PARTICULAR, I COULD ALMOST GUARANTEE HIM THAT USG WOULD SUPPORT SUCH AN OAU SECGEN STATEMENT, AS LONG AS IT WAS NOT UNEQUIVOCALLY PRO-ETHIOPIA AND ANTI-SOMALIA. NGANATHA THEN SAID HE WOULD URGE ETEKI TO MAKE THE DECLARATION. "IN ANY EVENT, HE'S BEEN TOO QUIET LATELY AND AFTER ALL WE AFRICANS ARE HIS BOSS," NGANATHA SAID.

5. TOTALLY ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE AND WITHOUT MY ASKING HIM TO MAKE A DIRECT DEMARCHE TO THE FONMIN, NGANATHA UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY THAT I WOULD APPRECIATE SUCH AN EFFORT. "JUST GIVE ME A TINKLE AND SAY 'GO AHEAD", HE SAID. "TOMORROW IS ETHIOPIAN EPHIPHANY, AND EVERYTHING WILL BE CLOSED, BUT I'LL BE GLAD TO ASK TO SEE THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON FRIDAY IF YOU STILL WANT ME TO."

6. EARLIER NGANATHA HAD SAID THAT IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE

UNITED STATES TO STAY PRESENT IN ETHIOPIA IN ORDER ONE DAY TO
PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE SOVIETS, A FERVENT KENYAN WISH.

7. I AM NOT SURE NGANATHA CAN
PERSUADE ETEKI TO MAKE THE DESIRED STATEMENT, BUT
IF HE SHOULD, AND WE CAN LIVE WITH IT, I HOPE WASHINGTON
WILL BE PREPARED TO HUMP IN WITH AFFIRMATIVE ACTION. IF
I STILL HAVE NOT RECEIVED AN APPOINTMENT WITH FONMIN BY
FRIDAY MORNING, I WILL GIVE NGANATHA A "GO AHEAD TINKLE"
BUT WILL, OF COURSE, WELCOME ANY FURTHER SUGGESTIONS
FROM THE DEPT AND NAIROBI IN THE MEANTIME. NGANATHA CLEARLY
APPRECIATED MY TAKING INITIATIVE WITH HIM.
MATHERON

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